Introduction

Since 2016, Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) has been assisting the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (DHW) to design and implement a new personal supports budget model for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) receiving Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). In this model, adults will get a support level based on their general support needs and extraordinary support needs. Each support level has a service mix and supports budget based on the amount of support adults in that level typically need. For more information about the overall budget model, visit mychoicematters.idaho.gov.

As part of the development process, HSRI is leading a qualitative data collection activity called **Pre-Implementation Review (PIR).** This is an important step that comes before the budget model is finalized. PIR is a process to check and see if the draft service mixes will provide enough support. The process takes place over several days and includes a close review of the records of 100 adults using the Adult DD Program. This document explains the goals and process of PIR.

The Goals of PIR

The goal of PIR is to make sure that the draft support levels and service mixes will meet most people's needs when implemented. Stated differently, it is an examination of the framework and new budget model on the whole.

The PIR helps to:

1. Determine the relative support need of individuals in each support level, based on a review of records of individual adults and their support needs

2. Determine that the model service mixes and budgets meet the needs of individuals in each support level

The Process of PIR

Step 1: Identify records to review. First, we identified a sample of adults who receive Adult DD services and who received a SIS-A assessment from a fully trained and certified assessor. In Idaho, approximately 800 adults received SIS-A assessments, 100 of which were included in the PIR sample. The 100 adults represent a variety of living settings (certified family home, supported living, or independent/living with family) and a variety of support levels (levels 1, 2, 3, M, and B).

Step 2: Train a group of reviewers. HSRI provides an in-depth training for reviewers (Quality Assurance staff from DHW and staff from the independent assessment provider) on how to review the records thoroughly, consistently, and securely.

Step 3: Review records individually. To understand relative support need at each level, we start by reviewing information on individual adults in the sample. Each reviewer is assigned a portion of the sample to independently review records for. At this stage, reviewers, purposefully, will not know the preliminary support level of adults in the sample. Reviewers will look at the SIS-A assessment, MSDA, most recent and historical ISPs or SSPs, and other documents to gain an understanding of their support needs. Reviewers use this information to answer a standard set of questions (PIR Review Form) that ask about support needs in different areas as well as the type and amount of services each adult may need and prefer.

Step 4: Review records in small groups. Next, we form small groups of 3 or 4 reviewers to discuss each record reviewed individually. Group members present information on each adult's support and service needs, and the group comes to consensus regarding the PIR Review Form responses. The small group then has the adult's assigned support level revealed to them. The small group will then discuss whether the draft service mix for that support level appears to meet the adult's needs. If it does not, they answer questions about the type and amount of service that could be added to the service mix to meet their needs.

Step 5: Review by support level. The completed review of records for adults in the sample inform the next step of understanding relative support need by level. Once all the records are reviewed, HSRI organizes responses from the PIR Review Forms by support level so that reviewers can look at information about adults in the same level together. Reviewers complete the PIR Step 2 Form as a group which asks about the relative support need of adults in each support level and if any adult seems to have very different support needs than others in the same level. Reviewers will be asked to detail why an individual seems to have very different support needs than others in that level.

Step 6: Review support level descriptions. Lastly, we use what we have learned about the needs of adults generally in each support level to improve the wording in the draft support level descriptions.

Step 7: Analyze the results of PIR. After PIR is complete, HSRI analyzes the data on support needs and the service mixes to determine what adjustments to the support level criteria or service mixes might be needed. PIR can also provide useful information about things that may need to be changed or considered before implementation—like specific exceptions processes, or items which may need to be included in the implementation evaluation. HSRI summarizes the findings and presents to them to DHW.

Important Things to Know About PIR

- The PIR process uses records to help offer insight into the adult's support needs and past use. However, we do not assume a person's past budget and past service plan are what the person wants or needs within the new budget model. The adult may need more, less, or different supports than they have received in the past.

- When reviewers conduct the individual review in Step 3, they will not know the adult's support level. They assess the adult's support need based on the record alone, without the influence of knowing at what level the person is preliminarily assigned.

- We conduct PIR to see if the mix is right and whether the overall budget offers enough support for someone to get the services they may want and need.

- Looking at a sample of records won't tell us about the unique circumstances of every adult being served, but that is not our aim. We are trying to see if the draft model is a good fit for most people, most of the time.

- The PIR may identify some adults who require more support than the proposed service mix will provide. While the service mixes might be changed as a result of PIR, the final service mixes may still offer less support than some adults require. Again, our goal is to implement a model that works for most people. If the mix is not right for a specific person, there will be ways for them to still get the support they need.

- The results of PIR won't be the final deciding factor about what the budgets will be. DHW still must go to the legislature and request the funds necessary to offer the budgets in the new mix.